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ABSTRACT

Examining race relations in the United States from a historical perspective, this book explains how the constitution is racist and how color blindness is actually a racist ideology. It is argued that Justice Harlan, in his dissenting opinion in Plessy v. Ferguson, meant that the constitution and the law must remain blind to the existence of race because color-blindness was the best way to insure white dominance. The progression of racist ideology in the United States from its Christian form to its evolutionary form to the current "color-blind" form can be understood as a consequence of changes that have occurred in the means and relations of production. Chapter 1, "Theories of Ideology," explores Marxian, anti-Marxian, and semi-Marxian theories as they relate to racism. Chapter 2, "Christianity, the Constitution, and Slavery," continues the historic exploration of racist ideologies, as do Chapters 3 through 6, titled "Sharecropping and the Rise of Evolutionary 'Racist' Ideology," "National Self-Determination and the Consociational State," "Prelude to 'Integration'," and "Civil Rights and Civil Uprisings," respectively. Chapter 7, "The Color-Blind Reaction," discusses the color blind reaction at work in affirmative action and contemporary issues. Chapter 8 considers "Color Blindness: Illusions and Consequences." When racism is placed in a historic perspective, it becomes clear that it is not some flaw that impedes the perfection of the American system, but instead has been a basic part of the American system from its inception. An appendix discusses symbolic racist literature through a survey of 619 college students and followup with 151 students. Each chapter contains references. (Contains two figures and one table.) (SLD)

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